

DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS OF THE LEBANON

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to maintain their Lebanese citizenship abroad are Christians, the overwhelming majority of whom are Maronites. 167 641

(v) The natural increase among the non-Christian population of the Lebanon, and particularly of the Shi'ah and the Druzes, is more than twice as great as that of the Christian population. These facts can serve as a key to explain various developments, the influence of which may be decisive in shaping the social character and political fate of the Lebanon. 161 62

Any person reviewing the demographic problems of the Lebanon cannot but observe a number of factors common to the Christian population of the Lebanon and the Yishuv (the Jewish community) in Palestine. The natural increase of the Christians in the Lebanon is roughly equal to that of the Yishuv in Palestine.*

Against this, however, the Yishuv in Palestine has incomparably more potential reserve in the way of immigration from abroad than that which is available to the Lebanese Christians through the return of emigrants. And just as the chief concern of Zionism in Palestine is the creation of possibilities for the absorption of fresh immigrants from abroad, so the Christians of the Lebanon are faced first and foremost with the problem of preventing emigration from the country, and, in consequence, the creation of opportunities for absorbing emigrants who do return and who can return to their homeland, given suitable absorptive conditions. In addition, attention is devoted to the creation of opportunities for absorbing Christians who require a refuge. 162 167 168

The absence of dynamic economic resources in the Lebanon which could increase and expand the sources of livelihood for a progressive population has led to a steady emigration from the country since the middle of the last century. This process has chiefly affected the Christians whose requirements are more developed and whose living standards are higher than those of their Druze and Moslem neighbours; it has created a serious social and political problem which, taken together with their lower rate of natural increase, places the future of the Lebanese Christians in permanent danger. 167 511 563

Robert Widmer described the economic reasons for a migration from the Lebanon in the following passage:† 167 161

"Lebanon is over-populated. As has been stated, the density of population is about 93 people to a square kilometre. In view of the topography of the country, its rocky mountains and its thin soil, its scarcity of mineral wealth, and its undeveloped industries, the land cannot support all its people. Consequently it is to be expected that some of them have to emigrate, leaving many dependent on their remittances." 311 433

As long as emigration was temporary, it was in many ways advantageous. To the general broadening of outlook resulting from contact with more advanced countries were added the material benefits of an increase in the country's capital (brought in by returning emigrants), an out- 167 177 457

* Fourteen per-mille among the Christians of the Lebanon as against fifteen per-mille among the Jews of Palestine.

† S. Himadeh, *Economic Organization of Syria, Beirut, 1936*, p. 14.

167 let for surplus population, which kept up the standard of living at home,
 457 and, most important, the inflow of a considerable volume of remittances.
 In 1924, for instance, remittances from abroad were estimated at 4½ million
 Palestine pounds, as compared with a total commodity export of 4 million
 Palestine pounds.*

167 Although there has been an unceasing stream of migrants returning
 home alongside the stream of emigration from the Lebanon, the percent-
 age of emigrants exceeded that of persons returning during all the years
 before the war except 1930 to 1933, the period of the economic crisis in
 America, when the number of emigrants declined and the number of
 persons returning increased. In 1928, for example, prior to the crisis in
 America, 14,288 persons emigrated from Syria and the Lebanon and 4,407
 returned. In 1932, during the American crisis, 2,426 emigrated and 3,196
 returned. In 1933 the emigrants increased again to 2,324, while those
 returning declined to 1,999.†

According to Widmer, there emigrated from Syria and the Lebanon
 120,000 persons between 1860 and 1900, and 200,000 persons between 1900
 and 1914. According to the annual reports of the French Government to
 the League of Nations, 95,000 people emigrated from Syria and the
 Lebanon between 1923 and 1930; about half of these came from the
 Lebanon. It therefore follows, according to these sources, that the total
 emigration from Syria and the Lebanon between 1860 and 1930 (excluding
 the period 1914 to 1923) amounted to 415,000.

[114] R. Thoumin has dealt extensively with the problem of emigration from
 the Lebanon.‡ He is one of the important investigators of this subject and
 an expert on the demography of Syria and the Lebanon.

[118] Emigration from the Lebanon began before 1860, largely for political
 reasons connected with the persecution of the Christians by the Turks and
 the unsatisfactory state of security in the country. The increasing stream
 of emigration during the period of autonomy in the Lebanon derived
 chiefly from economic sources, as the resources in the country became too
 restricted for the increase in population under stable political and social
 conditions.

The first stream of emigration turned to Egypt, where the Lebanese
 who had been educated in French schools found various opportunities of
 establishing themselves in Government offices and private institutions, as
 merchants, journalists, etc. Many of the emigrants established them-
 selves firmly in Egyptian life, and their participation in the cultural field
 was particularly noticeable. During the '80's and '90's of the last century
 a steady stream of immigration of Lebanese began to North and South
 America, and to Western Africa, whilst some went to Australia. In the
 course of time important centres of Lebanese emigration were established
 in the Argentine, Uruguay and Brazil. In the U.S. the chief centres are
 New York and Chicago.§

* W. B. Fish, "The Lebanon," *Geographical Review*, New York, April, 1944.

† S. Himadeh, *Economic Organization of Syria*, Beirut, 1936, p. 20.

‡ R. Thoumin, *Géographie Humaine de la Syrie Centrale*, Tours, 1936.

§ After the first World War there was an increase in the number of Lebanese
 in Detroit; here they were employed in the Ford Works.

562 riage. The most popular occupation, nursing, is, it will be remembered, preferred
462 because it is "safe," among other reasons.

Perhaps it can be said, as Fei concluded from a somewhat analogous situation in China (1939, p. 234), that women have more social individualism than they used to have, but to argue that the status of women has or has not been "improved" would, in the present writer's opinion, be tilting at windmills. Ambiguity of one's status and role in life can be harder to bear than, for example, the lack of the legal right to vote.

EMIGRANTS AND EMIGRATION

167 It is said that there are now as many Lebanese, or persons of Lebanese ancestry, living outside Lebanon as there are inside it (about 1,300,000). However this may be, there are certainly a great many, and the majority are in the United States.

Himadeh (1936, p. 13) points out that emigration from Lebanon started with the Phoenicians, the first Lebanese of whom anything is known, then as now experts in commercial enterprises. Lowdermilk (1944, p. 416) suggests that the primary impetus to the Phoenicians' emigration was the same as that to the twentieth century movement: overpopulation—ninety-three persons per square kilometer in recent times (Himadeh, 1936, p. 14).

It is estimated that between 1860 and 1900, 120,000 persons left Syria and Lebanon. The climax period was between 1900 and 1914 when an estimated 15,000 per year emigrated (Himadeh, 1936, p. 16). There was virtually none during the war when the country was blockaded. The process was resumed after the war, but with less intensity than before. Mass emigration to the United States was effectively halted by the Immigration Act of 1924. Since then, the Lebanese have gone to Central and South America, West Africa, and Australia.

[582] The original purpose of all the emigrants was to make a good amount of money and then return to the old country. A great many did just this, and in Munṣif some cases were reported of men who came and went several times. The majority, however, remained for good in the new country, most never returning, although quite a few came back temporarily to the old village for brides—telling evidence of the force of the principle of local endogamy. A few such cases occurred in Munṣif but none since the 1920's.

[177] It is the writer's private opinion that the emigrants themselves have not contributed a great deal to the process of acculturation in Lebanon, apart from drawing the interest of the stay-at-homes beyond their immediate locality. However, the emigrants have contributed substantially to the welfare of the old country which, in 1938 for example, had an adverse foreign trade balance of 4,000,000 pounds sterling (Hourani, 1946, p. 90). This was off-set by money from tourists, foreign investments, and remittances from emigrants. The last amounted to \$19,000,000. in 1924 (Himadeh, 1936, p. 18).

The people of Munṣif have done their share in the process of emigration.

621 remembered that genealogically and conceptually (the villagers' concept), Munşif
671 is a single kinship unit.¹

[178] This structure of in-groups is traditional, and it appears to have maintained its vitality in the face of great culture change, to which a limited amount of local exogamy seems to be the only major concession. When, however, we turn to the other areas of behavior which are reviewed in this chapter, we find that none of them can be discussed at all without reference to the problems of acculturation.

MONEY

136 The villagers' need for, and great concern about, money is very clear indeed. This is entirely understandable since the expense of education and manufactured products, alone, require much of it.

Money as it is known in the Western world is very ancient in the Middle East, in fact it apparently originated there. However, before about seventy-five years ago its use in most villages was limited, since for most needs barter and mutual help in a regime of local self-sufficiency were ordinarily enough to motivate exchange of goods and services.

• [457] Money began to come in large quantities into villages like Munşif from emigrants in America. At the same time, Lebanon began to receive foreign manufactured articles which could only be obtained through payment of cash. Today, money is the only means of exchange in the village, and prices are an incessant topic of conversation among the villagers. This is, of course, due in part to the fact that [435] [455] the country has suffered severe inflationary trends during the past ten years, in part, according to Murray, to "a natural speculative proclivity on the part of most of the people" (1947, p. 15).

[186] However, there are some indications that this recent emphasis on money as a thing in itself has set up disturbing conflicts in many people. For example, it is often heard that the Western powers are obviously bent upon buying the friendship of the Arabs, but that true friends cannot be bought. Such an attitude might either be a projection of attitudes and behavior prevalent among the speakers themselves, or it might be an expression of sincere and objective distaste for one of the unpleasant consequences of overemphasis on money. In any case, a conflict in values relating to money is consciously recognized.

EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE

181 "In Munşif you will find many people who live in poor houses but have much
871 education. This is because we would rather, if we must choose, use our money for
555 a fine education than for a fine house." This was one of the first remarks that was made to the writer about the culture of the village, and, as time went on,

¹ For additional perspectives on the structure of the village see Gulick (1953, pp. 370-71).

8: Fei and Klat

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/For a detailed statistical summary of Lebanon's balance of payments in 1951-52, see category 116, entire source./

8.2 Incidence of money from any source other than employment in year previous to interview, Tables 115, 116

434 Four hundred and twenty-one (22.25 %) of the sample had received money from miscellaneous sources. The largest group of these was people receiving money from rent of property (33 %). The second biggest specific source was relatives (19 %). Of particular interest are the remittances from overseas. About two and one half percent of our total sample, or an estimated 1250 families in Beirut, received income from abroad.

[457] 8.3 Total income, Table 117

Total income of the household from all sources for the previous year was tabulated in intervals of 1000 L.L. Over eight percent of the households had incomes of below 1000 L.L. The modal interval was 1001 - 2000 L.L. making the crude mode 1500 L.L. per year (20 %). Assuming that the average family needs 5000 L.L. as a minimum of health and decency per year, we find that about sixty-five percent do not meet this minimum.

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565 Arbitrarily assuming the middle class to have incomes ranging from 5001 L.L. to 25,000 L.L. it is noteworthy that this class constitutes about one third of the population (31 %) leaving four percent of the families making more than 25,000 L.L. per year.

Percentage-wise those sixty-five percent of the households which make 5000 L.L. or less receive twenty-one percent of the income, those thirty-one percent which make between

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Table 116

Source of Income Other than Work

Source	Number	Percent	sp.
Total	421	100.00	
Overseas	47	11.16	.015
Rental of rooms in own home	16	3.80	
Rent of property owned	108	25.78	.023
Relative	78	18.53	.019
Pension	6	1.42	
Debt return	1	0.24	
Others	130	30.86	.022
No answer	5	1.19	

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627 to lead to the following general conclusions concerning the influence of emigration upon the social organization of the village:

626 1. *Social control breaks down:* The influence of emigration, as a convenient escape from social control, has been discussed above. It is mentioned again, with a view to emphasizing its significance. At first, social control with its inevitable individual frustrations—was a factor in the enhancement of the emigration movement. However, once that step was taken, emigration began to react upon the social organization of the village and became a strong factor in the breakdown of its social control. The church and the kinship patterns of behavior were no longer adequate for the control of the elements in the new situation. A state of disorganization was the result.

205 2. *Rise of the village post office as*
621 *an institution:* Prior to the emigration movement, no regular post office existed in the village, and the people were not conscious of that institution in any significant manner. There was no need for it, as very few letters were received every month or so. With the advent of emigration, the situation was completely changed. Letters exchanged between the village and abroad became very frequent and highly significant. Through those letters, the ties between the emigrants and the folks at home were preserved and the flow of cash money into the village took place. Two concepts became highly significant in the people's vocabulary, as a result of

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that flow of correspondence, "Mak²⁰⁵ toob" (letter) and "Maktoob Mu⁴²¹ sowker" (registered letter). A check⁴⁵⁹ was always contained in the registered letter, and it became the symbol of joy and festivities for the family group.

Once or twice a week, the mail came to the village. Many hours before the arrival of the mail, people would assemble in the barber shop of Uncle Deeb (for he became the uncle of everybody) who was responsible for the distribution of the mail. For hours, before and after mail distribution, people would loiter there, exchanging the news of their emigrants and having a social time. Usually, Uncle Deeb preferred to put the registered letters aside and then give them in person to the families concerned. That was his reward—to be a messenger of joy to the people. As he went around, he spread the news of the registered letters far and wide, until everybody began to talk about them.

3. *Cash money becomes a supreme*¹⁶⁷
value in village life: Through the silk¹³⁶
 industry, foreign missions and con-⁴⁵⁷
 tact with the city, cash money, as a¹⁷⁸
 highly desirable article of value, was introduced into the village organization. In order to obtain more of this new value, emigrants were lured abroad. Through hard or easy work, straight or crooked means, they got hold of the precious cash and sent it back to their people. Without any exception, every single one of those letters mentioned above, referred to cash money that had been sent, was

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167 sent or would be sent to the folks at
 436 home. Sending the money home had
 457 a double significance to the emigrants.
 178 It gave them the satisfaction of living up to the obligation to the kinship group and it built for them prestige in the home village. At the same time, prestige and the satisfaction of luxurious needs were the reward of those who received the checks. They could buy new things with the money, lend it for interest or acquire more land with it.

In a word, emigration was the last step with which the village plunged into the Western economic system and became highly "money conscious." Some fifteen years ago, one of the upstart leaders in Bishmizzeen was reminded of the fact that the business he was conducting in Tripoli and Beirut was not considered as honest by the village folks. His answer was "Once I have a substantial amount of cash in my pocket, the people will forget all about the means by which I got the cash."

167 4. *Emigrants fail to return to the*
 624 *village:* At first, emigrants left the village, with a view to earning a certain amount of cash within a few years, and then returning to live in the village. The kinship and the communities ties were still strong, and the early emigrants considered the village as their true home. Some of those early emigrants, about 21, succeeded in carrying through the original intention—they came back and settled down permanently. The majority of those who returned, about 93, could not stay in the village more

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desperate had it not been for the other two new cultural factors which affected village life:

2. The introduction into Lebanon of Western-style educational institutions and curricula. The two main types were American Protestant and French Catholic. It was the former which exerted the stronger influence on al-Munsif. Mission schools were established in the village before the turn of the century, and many village children were sent to the American schools in Tripoli. By 1914, some villagers were themselves teaching school in al-Munsif. Protestantism itself was for the most part resisted, but the quest for secular education—in both Arabic and English—became a major concern in the village. The enthusiasm with which the villagers approached education can be accounted for in several ways. First, the literate individual has always been a person of high prestige in the Arab world. The villagers therefore recognized the fine opportunity for the improvement of personal status which was opened by the new schools. Second, they recognized that through education they would have a better chance of obtaining lucrative jobs and of thus averting the economic disaster which threatened them. Third, the American-sponsored curricula were, in part, a useful introduction to certain aspects of the culture of the West; and this brings us to the third major factor:

3. Emigration, primarily to the United States but also, to a lesser extent, to South America. It is very significant, from the cultural point of view, that the prime motive of the emigrants was not to leave their homeland forever in order to make a new life in a new country, but rather to stay temporarily in America in order to make a fortune and then return to the village to resume the old life under conditions of greater financial security. As it turned out, the majority of emigrants never did return. But the number who did, and the number of those who came and went several times before making up their minds, is often overlooked in general accounts of the emigration phenomenon. Remittances from America helped greatly to make the two decades before 1914 a prosperous time for al-Munsif. It was during this period that the very handsome houses with red tile roofs (imported from France) were built. During this period, also, some of those who did not emigrate took up nonagricultural jobs, such as school teaching, away from the village.

World War I brought a sudden halt to these developments. Owing to the Turkish blockade of Lebanon, emigration became impossible and the flood of remittances was reduced to a trickle. Toward the end of the war there was famine in al-Munsif, and it was reported that 100 persons died as a result of it. After the war, emigration and remittances were resumed. But the large-scale exodus to the United States was effectively ended by the U.S. Immigration Act of 1924, which allowed only a very small quota for the Levant. Emigration to other areas continued but also on a smaller

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SYRIA AND LEBANON

441 particularly cars and other finished goods for which Lebanese merchants have agencies for the whole Levant. Another type of transit trade is the exchange and gold markets: in 1950 there was trading in precious metals to a value of £L96,332,000, which dropped in 1951 to £L22,974,000 and £L39,461,000 in 1952. On these transactions not only has the volume dropped but also the profit, but vast sums were made in 1947 and 1948 when the margins on exchange and gold transactions were wide.

439 Middle East nationalism may have two effects on Lebanese commerce: on the one hand, if Lebanon maintains a policy of welcoming and facilitating foreign capital and merchants, there may be an exodus to Beirut of foreign concerns such as has already occurred as a result of the political disorders of 1951-2. (A tendency in the other direction can be seen in the taking over in March 1953 of the French Beirut electricity company.) But, on the other hand, growing nationalism, parochialism, and isolationism in her neighbours could throw Lebanon on her own resources; Jordan and Syria are both trying to encourage their own ports and merchants to the detriment of Beirut, and Lebanon must now make her services as middle-man and entrepôt more attractive and cheap so that her neighbours will continue to use them. At the same time, if these neighbours squeeze Beirut too hard, they might threaten Lebanon with ruin and it is conceivable that she might be compelled to attempt to seek a replacement of the lost source of income in association with Israel.

Finance

457 The Lebanese pound of 100 piastres is covered by the French [648] franc under an agreement of 31 January 1948, and Lebanon is a member of the International Monetary Fund and of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, with a quota of \$4½ million. At the end of 1951 45 per cent of the money circulating was covered by gold and a further 7 per cent by foreign currency—the gold cover has been steadily strengthened, to 54.9 per cent at the end of 1952, to 57.2 per cent by February 1953—when the gold backing amounted to £L114.25 million—and to 60.6 per cent by April 1953. This recent increase in the gold cover results from the part-repayment of an obligation incurred by Syria in 1948; a further instalment was to be repaid in October 1953. In 1939 there were £L29 million in notes circulating, in 1943 £L114 million, and in 1951 £L212 million, but by the middle of 1952 the circulation had dropped to £L199 million and it remained at around this figure until February 1953.

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figure until February 1953. The cost of living has likewise risen considerably; during the war it rose about sixfold, reaching a peak in 1945. It then decreased steadily until the autumn of 1950, when the Korean boom in raw material prices brought fresh inflationary pressures into Lebanon through her growing commercial and entrepôt trade, and persisted until early 1952. This fresh rise in prices was also caused by the rise in food prices (imported and home grown) following the bad harvest of 1951. Although early in 1953 prices had not resumed their pre-Korean level, they had declined steadily.

The following figures showing the indices of wholesale prices and the cost of living illustrate the salient movement in prices (1948 = 100).

	1939	1945	1950 July	1951 March	1951 Dec.	1952 May	1952 Dec.	1953 May
Wholesale prices	13	134	76	104	96	86	82	79
Cost of living	20	123	84	95	96	94	91	89

(SOURCE: IMF, *International Financial Statistics*, September 1953.)

Budgetary expenditure and receipts have also increased considerably, partly resulting from the rise in prices but also from greater commitments. The main increase in expenditure has been for defence, for the Palestine conflict and its aftermath, and for education. The sources of revenue have undergone a marked change: whereas customs provided 60 per cent of the revenue in 1939, they now contribute only 25 per cent, and new indirect taxes on general consumption now provide the major share, about 50 per cent. A measure to increase direct taxation was introduced in September 1951 in the form of a tax on agricultural income based on a 'presumptive' assessment value at progressive rates of tax. As yet its full effect is not known. The budget estimates for 1952 were: expenditure £L94.25 million, and receipts £L94.16 million; further details are given in table 2 on p. 502 below. The 1953 budget was expected to be of the order of £L110 million.

The division between the Syrian and the Lebanese currencies became effective at the end of January 1948 and this introduced an agio between the two currencies. At first this favoured Lebanon, but in 1951 the Syrian pound was the higher and then, in 1952, the Lebanese pound returned to a premium of from 2.6 per cent to 0.7 per cent. The exchange rates of foreign currencies are given in table 3 on p. 503 below.

International Trade

In defiance of the gloomy prophecies of economists, Lebanon contrives to flourish with an adverse trade balance, which in

want; there is no local committee of villagers to express their wishes. In other words, the centre works on behalf of, not with the population.* 871

8. It will be observed that the capital and maintenance costs of these ventures are largely provided by subscribers living abroad and that in each case the direction and management are in foreign hands. We made some tentative enquiries as to the possibility of a closer identification of government with the voluntary agencies in the development of the work now undertaken by the latter. There appeared, however, to be some hesitation on the part of the promoters lest the prerequisites of official registration would compromise liberty of action, without obtaining commensurate financial support in return. 871
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9. We discussed briefly with the Ministry of Social Affairs the possibility of creating or evoking a wide national interest in, and support for community welfare service of the classical pattern, particularly in rural areas, and of relying less than in the past upon foreign financial support and personnel for the continuance and development of existing institutions. It seemed, however, that greater importance, at any rate for the time being, was attached by the Social Affairs Department to the provision in the larger provincial towns of schools, hospitals, improved sanitation and other modern facilities, in an attempt to arrest the drift of population to an already over-crowded metropolis. This policy implied the use of foreign capital on a considerable scale for costly development schemes and not merely the provision of 361
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* Those who seek to evaluate the progress and permanence of community welfare activities in countries in which the concept (in the sense in which it is used by many sociologists) is still new, may find a moral in the experiences of a distinguished foreign social worker in the Middle East, as he related them to us in the early days of our investigations. He described the work of the group with which he was associated as passing through three phases: the first - the classical or theoretical approach - had been one of general benevolence and good intentions on the part of a group desirous of serving their fellow men. For a time the group had felt satisfied with what they were doing until it had dawned on them that their activities were making no measurable impact or impression on those for whose benefit they had been planned. This, our informant said, was "working on the community", and a wrong approach. A new start was therefore made; it was hoped that any factor of self-satisfaction had been sublimated in the material benefits planned for and concentrated on the village selected for the second phase. Sanitation was, as is usual in the villages of this part of the world, defective by Western standards. It seemed therefore that the group could usefully build a public latrine in the place. This was done. But as the villagers had never felt the want of improved sanitation and had not been consulted before the work was undertaken, the building remained unused until someone in the village had the idea of storing grain in it. Those who had done the building felt now that they had been working for the community; but here again, according to our informant, the approach was wrong and the effort misguided. But it led to a third - one in which concerted action is taken by the group, this time in concert with the community to plan and execute self-help projects that meet local needs and desires. External help, within the limits of the small resources at the disposal of the group, is provided only as required. Combined operations of this kind afford, in the view of our informant examples of community welfare in which all who participate work with the community, and that is the right approach. But as there is a strong and developing national consciousness in the area concerned and the initiative has been taken by foreigners, our friend, being a wise man, could only be cautiously optimistic and would not prophesy how long the pattern now set would endure in the changing circumstances of the times. 500

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the normal services of technical assistance - whether the latter were afforded under Point IV or from United Nations funds. We tentatively noted with the Department the possibility of a concurrent development of community social welfare with the help of United Nations Technical Assistance, e.g., by instituting appropriate leadership classes and education in citizenship. Further consideration of the suggestion was promised but there are reasons which militate against progress on these lines. First, we understood that there is a general impression in informed circles that assistance to governments, whether for social or economic projects, is or can be made available under Point IV under more favourable conditions than those applying to United Nations Technical Assistance (this specifically refers to the proportion of local expenditure to be borne by the recipient government). Second, discussions then current in the local press stressed the view so widely held in the country that the provision of financial aid, chiefly in the form of capital, is just as essential, perhaps more essential, than foreign technique. Third, the simultaneous elaboration in an under-developed country of too many schemes of economic and social development, all of which are intrinsically desirable but which, cumulatively, are beyond the present budgetary and administrative resources of the country not only places an intolerable load upon the machinery of government it may lead to demands for capital expenditure on a scale which cannot be met. It would be regrettable if any prying of requests for Technical Assistance that had to take place as a result of a belated recognition of this truth were to operate to the prejudice of fully considered schemes of community welfare development, particularly where such schemes had been designed as demonstration projects to become self-supporting in the near future.

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10. Experienced sociologists, working mainly with foreign agencies operating in the Lebanon and other Middle East countries, have urged the desirability under present conditions of establishing with outside financial aid and, if necessary, under foreign direction, more community welfare demonstration centres. In these centres, as they see the position, the whole process of self-help in meeting the economic, health, educational and social needs of a representative sample rural community might be demonstrated and gradually fulfilled. Wherever practicable, and as soon as possible, local officials (administrators, doctors, teachers, agronomists and other technicians) would be encouraged to participate in the organization and management of the demonstration centre, even to the extent (it was suggested by one authority consulted) of rewarding the part-time services of these officials by supplementing the pay which they already receive from public funds. Leaders of the local community would, as the work progressed, be encouraged to form management committees for the various activities. In this way, it was thought practicable, on the basis of actual experience, to arouse interest in, and create a wider public support for the adoption by the government of the movement, leading, in course of time, to the establishment under official auspices of other centres and, ultimately, to a national movement on a self-supporting basis. We were later to see (in Syria, paragraphs 63-68) the practical application of this philosophy on a modest scale under the auspices of the Near East Foundation.

11. As, however, technical assistance is available to governments only, and should be given only at their request, it is not easy to devise a means whereby pilot or demonstration projects of private agencies for developing community welfare and ultimate local self-government can be brought within the scope of the present system. Further, it would manifestly be improper to strain the regulations to enable any privately sponsored application for assistance in establishing multi-purpose community welfare centres to be assisted until the Government has itself supported such a request through official channels. We understand, however, that in the meantime certain foreign voluntary agencies are able to give a measure of assistance for the purpose.